

# Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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## Editorial

### Trusting In Providence

Some one has said that providence cares for the providential. This is true, at least in part. "Unto him that hath shall more be given." The shiftless and the indolent have no right to expect supernatural help. The Lord made trees to grow for builders. His rain descends for those who have plowed and planted. He helps when we can't help ourselves, but not when we can. He will not remove the stone from before the grave of Lazarus because his sisters *can*. But he sends an angel from heaven to roll away the stone from before the tomb of the Lord of life because the loving women *can not*. The same law prevails in spiritual matters. We are too much inclined to leave the questions of growth, of benevolence, of church enterprise, of spiritual practicalities and prosperity altogether to the Lord. Spiritual indolence and shiftlessness are not any more acceptable to God than any other kind. The faith that removes mountains will get a pick and commence digging, and the only kind of faith we have ever known to remove a mountain is the faith that went at the mountain with a pick and a shovel. Then comes the Lord with his mighty power, and the mountain melts away. "Let us pray about it," said one of two little girls who were late on the road to school. "That's all right, but let us pray running," replied the other. Trust in providence by all means, but hustle. The Lord always overtakes those who "run in the ways of his commandments."

### "So Loved"

New Testament theology is LOVE. "God so loved the world." That was the beginning of the gospel. But it was not the beginning of his love, for love had no beginning. It is as old as God. "God is love." No one ever said that before the beloved apostle said it. What are all the philosophies in comparison with those three words? In that short sentence are all the philosophies that are true, all the theologies that are veracious, yea, all the geologies, all science, all time, all history, the things that have been and the things that are to come. No wonder that he who wrote those three words saw visions, revelations, chariots of light, celestial cities and celestial armies, since love is the key to all this glory.

We are told that the earth is probably a hundred million years old, and that during all these ages God was cherishing the one thought, the one purpose, of building a mansion for man, a beautiful dwelling place for one of his most imperfect, most ungrateful, most exasperating creatures.

How many years, how many millions of treasures, would even the most patient of earthly fathers consume in building an estate for a son who constantly disobeyed and blasphemed him? It is just what our Heavenly Father did. During the long years before the creation of man, he went on patiently and lovingly building such a palace for him, adapted in all respects to his comfort, adorned with the bloom of springtime, curtained with cloud tapestries of silver and gold, lighted by the lamps of heaven. Then again behold the love revealed in his providence, causing his sun to shine upon the evil and the good, his rain to fall upon the just and the unjust. Watching over each one of us with sleepless eye, day and night, preserving us in life and health, choosing every event, ordaining every change, making all things work together for our good.

But in the Redemption behold the final revelation of God's love. We are not pointed to God's love in creation, because it is too large a volume; few can read it. We are not pointed to God's love in providence, because it is too intricate a mystery; few can understand it. But we are told: God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life. We can understand that. It is the language of the heart. The ear cannot see. The eye cannot hear. The intellect cannot comprehend love. It is the office of the heart. Every father, every mother, the simplest, the dumbest, can understand love when it is written in terms of supremest sacrifice. The love that gives its best, its all; which never becomes impatient or discouraged, can never be quenched tho we pour upon its generous fires all the oceans of human ingratitude. We can understand what it is, but we can never measure it, any more than we can measure the heights which rise above us, or the depths that descend beneath.

Enforced by obligation: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" by interest: "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord;" by gratitude: "We love him because he first loved us;" here and there a responsive soul finds the kindling of a love which testifies to the divine kinship, and brings a touch of heaven into the erstwhile gloom of loveless and joyless life. How infinitely worth while it is to find this love only they can tell who have realized it. Forthwith that love begins to bear its fruit in a life of purity and peace. There is no such purifier as love. There is no other benediction of peace to compare with it. There is in nature or elsewhere no such dynamic force to set men going to the ends of the earth, bearing this evangel, driving out the old darkness, bringing in the new light, bringing in new civilizations, new humanities, new resurrections.